

1 APPEARANCES (continued):

2 MR. VARNADO PAYNEEL
3 30 West Cermak Road
4 Chicago, Illinois 60616
5 pro se

6 MR. MICHAEL SYNOWIECKI
7 20 South Clark Street, Suite 400
8 Chicago, Illinois, 60603
9 appearing for Peoples Gas,
10 Light and Coke Company
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18 SULLIVAN REPORTING COMPANY, by
19 PATRICIA WESLEY
20 LICENSE NO. 084-002170
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1 JUDGE CARDONI: Pursuant to the authority of the
2 Illinois Commerce Commission, I now call Docket
3 16-0397. This is Adwin Uchechi El's complaint
4 versus Peoples Gas. It is a complaint as to billing
5 and charges in Chicago, Illinois.

6 May I have the appearances please for
7 the record.

8 Mr. Uchechi, please state your name,
9 and spell it, and your address.

10 MR. UCHECHI: My name is Adwin Uchechi El --
11 spelled A - as in apple - D-W-I-N, middle name, last
12 name Uchechi El, U-C-H-E-C-H-I E-L.

13 JUDGE CARDONI: And your address.

14 MR. UCHECHI: 1913 South Lawndale, 1st floor.

15 JUDGE CARDONI: And, sir, would you state your
16 name and address.

17 MR. VARNADO: Yes. My name is Varnado Payneel.
18 That's V-A-R-N-A-D-O P-A-Y-N-E-E-L, 30 West Cermak
19 Road, Chicago, Illinois, 60616.

20 JUDGE CARDONI: Thank you.

21 And for the company.

22 MR. SYNOWIECKI: Michael Synowiecki on behalf of

1 Peoples Gas, Light and Coke Company. My last name
2 is spelled S-Y-N-O-W-I-E-C-K-I. My address is
3 20 South Clark Street, Suite 400, that's Chicago,
4 Illinois, 60603.

5 JUDGE CARDONI: Okay. This is our first hearing
6 today in this matter. Mr. Uchechi, did you want to
7 briefly discuss why you are here today.

8 MR. UCHECHI: Well, I'm here to discuss the fact
9 that we, as Moorish -- as Moorish Americans and my
10 colleague here, we don't pay taxes in no type of
11 form, and somehow Peoples Gas finds a reason to pay
12 some tax that I don't even understand, but I assured
13 them that we pay no taxes at all.

14 We do have a treaty from 1786 that we
15 had with the government -- with the U. S.
16 Government, and it's expected that we don't pay
17 taxes. We are actually a nation within a nation, so
18 taxes under no form that we pay. We have our
19 identification to back us on that, and, I mean,
20 shouldn't be no problem.

21 I sent all my information. I've sent
22 my information for months and somehow it's being

1 rejected and ignored as though it's unlawful when
2 it's fully lawful. It's lawful. I don't have no
3 problem at all. I mean, I don't have no problem. I
4 go elsewhere to utilize my tax status and I don't
5 see any reason why I should have a problem here.

6 JUDGE CARDONI: Are you saying that you have a
7 personal tax exempt status?

8 MR. UCHECHI: As a nation. We are a Moorish
9 nation, so, I mean, individuals are exempt from
10 taxes.

11 JUDGE CARDONI: So how much -- have you paid
12 Peoples Gas any of your bills?

13 MR. UCHECHI: I have been paying, but I've been
14 struggling with this for months ever since I paid.
15 You know, I signed on to it, but I rejected it. I
16 appealed the taxes all along the way, so we keep on
17 going through different reasons why we can't solve
18 this problem, so that's why I'm here. Hopefully we
19 can solve this problem right here.

20 JUDGE CARDONI: Okay. Have you -- so it is your
21 contention that you don't owe the taxes or that you
22 don't owe the bill at all?

1 MR. UCHECHI: I don't -- I won't pay no taxes
2 that I'm suppose to pay. I am not suppose to pay
3 any taxes at all, and I have been paying them all
4 along the way when, the fact of the matter, I'm not
5 suppose to, so I've been paying my bills under
6 duress basically, because, of course, I want to keep
7 my gas going, so I have to pay to keep them going,
8 but it's unlawful. That's what it is.

9 JUDGE CARDONI: All right. Mr. Synowiecki,
10 response.

11 MR. SYNOWIECKI: The company tried to work this
12 out and he's not exempt under state code or any
13 municipal code, and so we just ask for 21 to 28 days
14 to answer or plead otherwise.

15 JUDGE CARDONI: Okay. Mr. Uchechi, it sounds
16 like the company is going to file a response to your
17 complaint and you'll be allowed to respond to that
18 response, if that makes sense. You will be allowed
19 to reply.

20 What I think we need to do is set
21 another status hearing, that will be an evidentiary
22 hearing, if the matter is not worked out prior to

1 that.

2 MR. UCHECHI: Okay. I'm sorry?

3 JUDGE CARDONI: Go ahead.

4 MR. UCHECHI: So respond to what I just

5 stated --

6 JUDGE CARDONI: In writing.

7 MR. UCHECHI: -- as it is?

8 It was not clear in the past of what I

9 was asking?

10 JUDGE CARDONI: Well, since this is now -- in the

11 past you worked things out. You discussed things

12 informally. When you make this filing, it became a

13 formal complaint --

14 MR. UCHECHI: I understand.

15 JUDGE CARDONI: -- so the company would respond

16 formally to your complaint.

17 MR. UCHECHI: Thank you for making that clear.

18 JUDGE CARDONI: So 28 days, Mr. Synowiecki?

19 MR. SYNOWIECKI: Please, Judge.

20 JUDGE CARDONI: By October 20th?

21 MR. SYNOWIECKI: That works, Judge.

22 JUDGE CARDONI: Okay. Let's just set that date.

1 Company's answer by October 20th, and then I'll take
2 a look at what that is and decide how long you'll
3 have to reply to that, if necessary.

4 I don't want to give you a date and
5 perhaps you would need more time than what I would
6 say now, so I'll receive that on the 20th, then I'll
7 send out something in the mail that gives you an
8 indication of what will happen next, but let's just,
9 as a safeguard, set a hearing in this matter for --
10 how about November 17th. That's a Thursday --

11 MR. UCHECHI: Okay.

12 JUDGE CARDONI: -- at 10 o'clock.

13 MR. UCHECHI: That will be fine.

14 JUDGE CARDONI: Does that work for Peoples?

15 MR. SYNOWIECKI: What time was that again?

16 JUDGE CARDONI: 10 o'clock.

17 MR. SYNOWIECKI: 10 o'clock. That works for us,
18 Judge.

19 JUDGE CARDONI: Okay. Mr. Uchechi, that would be
20 an evidentiary hearing, so if this matter doesn't
21 settle in some other way, it will be the formal
22 process to get all of the facts in the record.

1 So you'll bring any witnesses you
2 have, any documentation that you have that you would
3 like to go in the record at that time, and you will
4 present your case to me, and then Peoples will do
5 the same thing. Does that make sense?

6 MR. UCHECHI: That makes sense, your Honor.

7 JUDGE CARDONI: You just need to make sure on
8 that date you bring everything that you need for
9 your case. Okay.

10 MR. UCHECHI: Okay. Sounds good.

11 JUDGE CARDONI: Just to recap, we are going to do
12 the company's answer on or before October 20th, an
13 evidentiary hearing on November 17th at 10 a.m.

14 Is there anything else we need to
15 discuss today?

16 MR. SYNOWIECKI: No, Judge.

17 JUDGE CARDONI: Thank you very much. We'll be
18 entered and continued until November 17, 10 a.m.

19 (Whereupon, the above
20 matter was adjourned, to
21 be continued to
22 November 1, 2016 at 10 a.m.)